



Parish of St Peter & The Good Shepherd Bearsted & Harrietsham

A Member of Bearsted Area Churches Together



Newsletter

St Peter's Church, Button Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8NJ

Church of The Good Shepherd, Rectory Lane (off East Street), Harrietsham, ME17 1HS

Parish Priest: Father Geoffrey Pointer: 01622 736100, email: parishpriest@catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Reverend Cyril Durbin: 01622 630055

St Peter's Hall Bookings: 07919 084730

Catholic Schools in our local area:

St Francis Primary, Queen's Road, Maidstone ME16 0LB (Telephone: 771540)

The Holy Family Primary, Bicknor Road, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15 9PS (Telephone: 756778)

St Simon Stock Catholic Secondary, Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP (Telephone: 754551)

Parish Website and YouTube:
www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Year B

THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT

17th December 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: RECOGNISING JESUS IN OUR LIVES If we were still using the Latin Mass, one of the first words we would have heard this Sunday would have been 'Gaudete' meaning 'rejoice'. The third Sunday of Advent, otherwise known as 'Gaudete Sunday' is a day upon which we are invited to rejoice. But what if we don't feel as though there is much to rejoice about? Should we pretend? Should we put on a smile and thank God for our blessings with a joy that we don't honestly feel in our hearts? There's a well know saying that goes "Every cloud has a silver lining." The old adage is telling us to look for good in every circumstance, but in truth it's not always easy to believe in silver linings or know how to find them. Our lives can sometimes feel like a pointless spiral of problems, and finding joy can be elusive.



In the days of John the Baptist, the Jewish people had been praying for a messiah who would come in great power like a regal warrior to restore Israel. They were unable to recognise Jesus as the answer to their problems, because he was just the humble son of a poor carpenter. They didn't recognise him because he wasn't what they were expecting. They were unable to embrace their 'silver lining'. Today it is easy to recognise Jesus in our lives when things are going well, but in our suffering Jesus' presence can be harder to recognise. God's agenda is hardly ever our own agenda. The solutions we yearn for and pray for are probably not God's solutions. Today's challenge is to rejoice in God's presence in all of life's circumstances both good and bad. We need to recognise God when he comes to us in ways we do not expect. *Chapel Bell.*

RECOMMENDED for ADVENT Advent is a time of devout and expectant delight. In the second phase of the season of Advent, from **17th December** (this Sunday), the liturgy is more directly addressed to preparing to commemorate and celebrate the birth of Our Lord, and the readings at daily Mass reflect this (see <http://eepurl.com/bF0b6P>). Try then to get to Mass during the final days of Advent: there is so much beauty in the readings of this season. ♦ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation (confession): there will be a penance service at St Francis', Maidstone, on Monday **18th December** at 7.30pm. ♦ A list of Prisoners of Conscience whom you may wish to send Christmas Cards to this year is now available. Pick one up after Mass.

COFFEE at GOOD SHEPHERD After Mass, this Sunday, **17th December**: back by popular demand, a rare chance to linger awhile, drink coffee and meet fellow parishioners.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE The draw will take place **this Sunday** after Mass at St Peter's; mulled wine and mince pies will be served. Thank you to all those who have bought and sold tickets: good luck!

CHRISTMAS POSTER Pick up a Knights of St Columba Christmas poster and display it in your window or other prominent position.

ADVENT APPEAL This year's Advent Appeal is in aid of The Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter. *We hope to welcome a speaker at the 10.30 Mass this Sunday.* The Shelter offers a warm welcome overnight for homeless people during the coldest months. Envelopes still available. Please return by the end of Advent. Thank you. ❄ *Maidstone Day Care Centre* would be very grateful if you could donate any of the following to help the homeless in Maidstone, mainly for men but also some women: · Winter clothes, including shoes and boots, coats, pants and socks, gloves, scarves, hats. · Sleeping bags and blankets. · Toiletries. Please leave any donations, clearly marked, in the parish room at St Peter's. Marie Quarman will continue to collect until week ending **28th January**. Thank you.

St PETER'S CHOIR Practice: this **Tuesday, 19th December**, 7.30 - 9.00pm (*note early start*).

PARISH SOCIAL The final profit for the recent Quiz Night came to **£220**: this goes to our Advent Appeal for The Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter. Our thanks to our supporters and organizers.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 17th DECEMBER 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT (B)** ✕

Sun 17th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday • <i>O Sapientia: O Wisdom</i>	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Dec'd of McGrath & Roche families
Mon 18th	<i>O Adonai: O Sacred Lord</i>	7.00pm	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
Tues 19th	<i>O Radix Jesse: O Root of Jesse</i>	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 20th	<i>O Clavis David: O Key of David</i>	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
Thu 21st	<i>O Oriens: O Radiant Dawn</i>	7.00am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
		6.00pm	Family Carols
Fri 22nd	<i>O Rex Gentium: O King of all the nations</i>	10.00am	✕ Mass: Jim Kelly RIP
Sat 23rd	<i>O Emmanuel: O God with us</i>	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT (B)** ✕

Sun 24th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Kathryn Nicol
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Celebrant's Intention

✕ **The NATIVITY of THE LORD** ✕
Christmas Day

Sun 24th	Christmas Vigil	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Mariusz Koras RIP
Mon 25th	Christmas Dawn	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
	Christmas Day	10.30am	✕ Mass: Julia Greenrod RIP

CAROL CELEBRATION This Thursday, **21st December, 6pm** at St Peter's. All are welcome to this family and light-hearted event. Children are encouraged to dress up as their favourite Nativity character (sadly no Paddington Bears). We will as usual be collecting wrapped gifts for the Women's Refuge - toys for children and toiletries for women. If anyone would like to accompany the singing with Pete and Bob, please come along at about 4.30 on the day for a quick practice. You will be very welcome. Any instrument!! *Bob*.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for December** – that the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming new generations.
- **For all the people living in the middle-east.** May religion be a force for good here, drawing the different communities together, rather than an excuse for disagreement and unrest.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes** especially Joan Hardings; for those who have died recently especially David Smith (funeral at Good Shepherd, Wednesday **27th December**); and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); for all our relatives and friends and for the intentions on the notice board.
- **Anniversaries this week** (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Rose Greenrod, Winifred Sanity, Nicholas Newman, Anna Hale, Elizabeth Honywood, Vincent Coker, Winifred Scott and Irena Harrison. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£347.00** (Gift Aided, **£206.00**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£149.00**). ♦ The retiring collection to help with the cost of flowers and decorations at Christmas brought in **£149.00**. ☺ The **collection at all Masses on Christmas Day** is parishioners' personal offering to their parish priest. In this diocese priests rely for most of their income on the offerings made at Christmas and Easter, so please be as generous as your means allow. Envelopes are available for this. Thank you. ♦ **Crib offerings** throughout the coming season will be shared between the "Friends of the Holy Land", offering help to the poorest families in Bethlehem, and "Crisis Fund in Southwark" to help support children, young people and families in immediate need.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2018 Applications have now closed. Preparations for those parents who have enrolled their children begin on **Friday 5th January** at 4pm. Parents will be updated by email.